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# **Transforming Thessaloniki into an ‘Eventful City’ with the main focus on dance**

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another's work, I have attributed the sources according to the Regulations set in the Student's Handbook.

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## **Abstract**

Thessaloniki is an interesting destination and despite being a 'city with events', it is not an 'eventful city' yet, meaning that as a destination Thessaloniki is not identified with a single cultural mega-event. Dance culture is a great part of the city's modern as well as older profile, thus dance could be identified with the image of Thessaloniki. Taking into consideration other eventful cities, such as Edinburgh where the Fringe Festival takes place every August, a similar festival could be organized in Thessaloniki to attract a large number of tourists.

More specifically an already existing cultural festival with a duration roughly of a month is the Dimitria festival, in which musical, theatrical, and acts of other forms of art are staged. The Dimitria Festival could be expanded with additional acts, especially Dance performances to appeal to youth as well. Consequently, the profile of this already existing festival needs to be transformed; more young people from around Europe would be interested in visiting the festival and the destination. Such a suggestion could transform Thessaloniki into an eventful city, which is not an infeasible goal taking into consideration that Thessaloniki is a great student city with a lively culture just like Edinburgh or any other eventful city. Moreover, it is quite interesting the fact that the Dimitria Festival embraces the culture, the long history of the city, takes place since 1966 and takes place in October, which is not a relatively busy month for Thessaloniki. For this reason, the Dimitria Festival in October could be the ideal mega-event for Thessaloniki to be transformed into an eventful city.

Dance events should be initiated, promoted, and organized by the Culture Department of the city since these events should aim to attract tourists from all over the world, not only participants from the local community. Besides, the management of dance festivals should collaborate with the members of the local Culture Department board. Unfortunately, in Thessaloniki, the local authorities responsible for Cultural affairs are elected representatives rather than professionals who have the know-how.

The initial research question is how Thessaloniki will be transformed into an eventful city with the main focus on dance and by extension how the dance events will become the trademark of Thessaloniki and will be reason enough for tourists interested in dance to visit Thessaloniki. Bearing in mind that today tourists combine traveling with attending an event,

a dance mega-event in Thessaloniki could attract dancers from all over the world along with the yearly number of tourists.

I firmly believe that Thessaloniki embraces cultural events since the local community is highly involved in such initiatives. For this reason, the profile of the city could be identified with dance; hence a stronger destination brand could be created.

Keywords: Eventful city, City with events, Thessaloniki, Dance, Destination brand

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

Nowadays, citizens travel more often and visit destinations that were not quite popular some years ago. Today travelers have multiple and quite interesting city breaks at their disposal; thus the competitiveness among the various destinations around the globe is high.

Thessaloniki is the second-largest city in Greece, a country based on the tourism industry. Greek tourism is mainly seasonal due to the Mediterranean climate of the country. Visitors travel to Greece basically during the summer months to enjoy the sea, sun, and sand. In this day and age, Greek DMOs fight seasonality and aim to promote the unique culture and temperament of Greek hospitality. Thessaloniki is an exceptional urban center with a long history, tradition, known for locals' hospitality, gastronomy and high taste for cultural spectacles. Today locals are concerned about cultural spectacles, which are their main form of entertainment. The local community is passionate about dance, many dance halls, dance clubs exist and many dance festivals are staged in the city.

Today Thessaloniki is a city with events. Many events, such as the Film International Festival, the Short Film Festival, the Dimitria Festival, the Thessaloniki Dance Festival, the Colour Day, the Street Mode Festival, the Beer Festival, the Burger Festival, the Christmas Land 'Asterokosmos', the Book Exhibition and many more. Culture plays a vital role in locals' life and this is why so many events take place in Thessaloniki. All year round locals attend cultural events even during the years of the economic crisis.

However, these attributes are not known on an international level and based on these a competitive advantage of Thessaloniki could be created. Despite the fact that Thessaloniki is a city with events, the city does not host a cultural event to be popular enough on an international level and to transform the city into an eventful city.

The following dissertation aims to analyze the differentiation strategy of eventful cities and the significance of competitive advantage for a destination. The main hypothesis is whether 'eventful city' is a successful differentiation strategy, whether Thessaloniki could become an eventful city if this strategy would benefit the destination and if Dance could be the main focus of this mega-event. In this dissertation, various cases of eventful cities will be

discussed and will be drawn a parallel between Thessaloniki and the model cities aiming to conclude if Thessaloniki would be a successful example of an eventful city and how this could be achieved.

This dissertation may interest the stakeholders who are responsible for events in Thessaloniki.

## **2. Literature Review**



## **2.1 The concept of 'Eventful City'**

Nowadays there is a massive competition in the tourism industry between destinations; this is why there is an urgent need for cities to create a unique identity, a trademark that will make them worth visiting. Some cities have followed the concept of 'eventful cities', which means that the city is identified with a cultural event and this event makes the city famous. The concept of 'eventful city' is a part of the differentiation strategy. (Hannigan and Richards, 2017)

Especially after the Second World War festivals played the role of cultural diplomat. The cultural festival functioned as a bridge connecting European cities and cultures. Cultural international events have always been a springboard to a common European and an extent a worldwide consciousness. Later, the institution of the European capital city came into the spotlight. (European cities to discuss the successes and failures of 'Eventful Cities' - European Cities Marketing, 2020)

Urban destinations sought to attract visitors by organizing a unique event. First of all, this event served as an identity of the residents, meaning that the local community could identify themselves with the event since the event was based on daily life and the culture of the community. The social bonds of the community are boosted through such events since the members of a community interact and embrace their uniqueness. Secondly, a well-branded festival appealing to the international market may attract tourists and make the festival sustainable and last through the years. This is how the concept of "eventful cities" came into the spotlight. Today many destinations are branded as "eventful cities", such as Edinburgh (Fringe Festival), Cannes (Cannes Festival), Milan (Milan Fashion Week), etc.

Successful eventful cities are urban cities that use the already existing facilities and venues as a tool to organize such events; instead of leaving venues underutilized in the low season. A successful model is the "Barcelona Model" since after the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992 the authorities exploited the reputation and the facilities built during the Olympic Games period. A series of theme years about the Olympic Games followed (2000-2004) and then in 2002 the Gaudi Year took place. Eventful city strategies aim for long-term strategies and planning to attract tourists throughout the years and not periodically. Long-range planning of 20-25 years is considered ideal to implement such a strategy.

## 2.2 The difference between 'Eventful City' and 'City with Events'

A 'City with Events' is any city that conducts various events throughout the year without having a cultural event that is the trademark of the city and makes the city famous for or could attract a large number of tourists. A city with events cannot be branded as an Event City, since the various events cannot be compared to a Mega event of an Eventful City, which contributes to the formation of a unique identity of the destination. A city with events is Market-Led meaning that it is driven by the needs of the market and creates the portfolio of the event based on them. A personal touch is absent and there are no characteristics that diversify the event from the mass.

On the contrary, 'Eventful cities' use events as a means of attaining sustainability, viability, and development. It is worth mentioning that a city is considered eventful when the city is famous on an international level thanks to this single event and people identify the city with the event. For example, everybody connects Cannes to the Cannes Festival and undoubtedly the festival comes first to mind when the city is mentioned. (Hannigan and Richards, 2017) Besides, an eventful city is Market Leader, it dominates in the market and directs the market towards its path.

*Table 1 Differences between "cities of events" and "eventful cities" from Richards and Palmer,* 2010.

A city with events is...	An eventful city is...
Sectoral	Holistic
Tactical	Strategic
Reactive	Proactive
Container of events	Generator of events
Ad Hoc	Coordinated
Competition	Cooperation
Event policy	Events as a policy tool
Market led	Market leader
City marketing	City making
Spectacle	Involvement

An eventful city follows a specific strategy and recognizes that a festival has multiple dimensions in the city life. The profile of the city and the profile of the event are interchanged. The community embraces the event and has a healthy relationship with the visitors. The event develops the economic and social level of the city and simultaneously promotes the cultural character of the city.

### **2.3 The effectiveness of 'eventfulness'**

There are two models when it comes to the portfolio design of event cities. The first model stresses the extrinsic value of events as a tool for tourism, economic progress. This model requires a strategic marketing plan which aims to profit. The second model is based on the intrinsic value of events in connection with their input to culture and society. For instance, sports and arts play a vital role in the prosperity and well-being of the members of a community; therefore the organization of such events offers people spiritual and physical benefits. The planning of cultural events has a meaningful purpose. Notwithstanding that these models deviate enough; there is no doubt that they could be blended since a single event could contribute both to financial augmentation and cultural reinforcement. (Getz, 2016)

Even from ancient times events played a central role in civic life. The Greek Agora or the Roman Forum was of utmost significance for the citizens' lives. In later times cities held festivals, such as carnivals, that had an even longer duration, they even lasted for weeks. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

Citizens escaped from their routine thanks to such events. Of course, today people visit events to escape reality as well. However, today many people face festivals as a means of social cohesion since communities come closer or stay connected thanks to them. Moreover, visitors view festivals as an educational institution. Many festivals aim to educate people since festivals teach the audience about the customs and the traditions of the hosting city. The perpetuation of customs and culture is a key factor in modern societies. Citizens should be informed about the culture of their birthplace. Nevertheless, cultural events are quite attractive even to citizens from all over the world and not only to the locals;

thus many travelers visit destinations to attend cultural events and learn about the customs and traditions of new to them societies. Events give meaning to modern urban life and are a means to celebrate history and culture resulting in social cohesion. Festivals also aim to communicate what the residents of the hosting city represent.

Many destinations fight Tourism Seasonality and major attempts to fight seasonality in destination take place. Greece, as well as other Mediterranean countries, fights Natural Seasonality since many tourists select this destination because of the sunny weather. Wintertime is a hard season for such destinations; thus the viability of tourism professions is questioned. However, city-break destinations are non-seasonal destinations, because they are always busy. Thus smaller cities can follow Event organization as a strategy to differentiate. The generation of Event Planning as a Differentiation Strategy resulted in the fact that smaller cities started playing a leading role in the tourism market. (Richards & Palmer, 2010) Large urban destinations can hardly create this regional attachment because urban cities are more industrial, have a more multicultural touch, and lack a unique cultural character. Eventfulness is an opportunity for small cities to become globally well-known and attract visitors. Thereupon the independence of smaller cities from the capital city follows since they acquire an exclusive character. Today DMOs plan to bring tourists to smaller cities as well rather than concentrating masses of tourists in large urban centers. Consequently, smaller cities are not alienated and they can be a potential tourist destination.

Nevertheless, the positive effects of eventfulness to a city should not be overlooked. The quality of life in an eventful city is improved since the creative activity is raised. The community feels more connected and the sense of belonging is reinforced. The audience of the city is grown, the city becomes more recognizable. At the same time, recreational and educational opportunities are exponentially increased. Of course, the economic benefits are numerous, since many job vacancies are created. The national and the international profile of the city is upgraded, new partnerships are created and last but not least the city meets the civic objectives. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

Events opposing tourist attractions are flexible. The venues can differ, the dates can change or the portfolio to adapt to the changes in the society notwithstanding that the core theme maintains the same. Events create a certain spectacle and a certain atmosphere that

immerse the visitor in a certain mood. An additional positive effect of an event is that it creates a sense of belonging. Visitors want to be a part of something big and they want to be there, meaning that they feel attached to it. The emotional attachment to a destination can be created through intangible factors, such as events rather than attractions and it is something that destinations urge to attain. In this way, visitors would like to return to the destination or will urge their friends to visit it. Besides an event is not necessarily a costly strategy and it can accomplish a great impact in a short time.

Experiences are intangible elements in a physical civilization. Events are experiences and the experiences are of utmost significance in modern society. We live in an era of experiences, customers buy benefits; therefore experiences rather than mere products. Even traveling today has a purpose. Thus travelers do not hesitate to spend a great amount of money to gain an one of a kind experience because they feel that they invest their money since they develop their personality and they enrich their intellectual world. Experiences are by definition one of a kind and cannot be reproduced, whereas tangible things can be easily replicated.

#### **2.4 Sustainability of Eventful City**

Numerous researches have proved that cultural tourism results in the Sustainability of the contextual destination. Cultural tourism reinforces the knowledge expansion of individuals, thus their establishment is of utmost significance. An event has certain key features: 1) cultural content, 2) timing and location, 3) visitors and 4) stakeholders. (Richards & Palmer, 2010) An event takes place in a certain city at a certain time of the year. A cultural portfolio, such as dancing, gastronomy, theatre, and other forms of human culture manifestation plays a leading role. In reality, the most vital part of a festival is the cultural content, since if the content of an event is appealing it may attract a large audience, and correspondingly if it is a matter of indifference it is not going to become a success.

Needless to say, an eventful city employs a large percentage of city residents. Not only young and rising performers find a job at the festival, but also local entrepreneurs, hoteliers and even taxi drivers increase their income during the festival period.

Richards and Palmer support that “Eventful cities (act) as an antidote to stagnation” (2010). An eventful city attempts to become distinctive and create cultural, economic and social prosperity. These are assets of a Sustainable City. Towards attaining Sustainability there three core dimensions a) the Sustainable events, b) the Sustainable events Portfolios and c) Sustainable Populations of events. (Getz, 2016)

Sustainable events incline to meet ‘Green Standards’ and despite that, the main goal is to endure over time not all events can meet this core goal. Green and Sustainable events are socially responsible, follow the government policies and have a triple-bottom-line since they take into consideration a) people, meaning they have social consciousness, b) profit, thus they are financially sustainable and c) the environment because they embrace an eco-friendly approach. Of course, a green event by definition should have a sustainable audience, which is impossible because the audience is quite large. Moreover, a mega event attracts audiences from all over the world meaning that they will weigh the environment with fossil fuels. A mega event has an enormous amount of waste and numerous constructions have to be processed to hold the event, actions that oppose eco-friendly consciousness. In addition, the stakeholders (sponsors and ambassadors) of the event should adopt a sustainable and social image. Too much emphasis is placed on environmental responsibility when it comes to Sustainable events and by its very nature, a mega event is the antonym of green events. Enduring festivals are defined by vision and leadership. Leadership refers to sustainable festivals since they have the stability to meet their goals. The events that endure more are not profit-driven organizations, a more cultural motive is a ‘safe niche’. (Getz,2016)

The second dimension of Sustainable events is the Sustainable event Portfolio, which aims to identify common goals and values. The extrinsic values of an event are that events are interpreted as assets to achieve long-term sustainable portfolios, while the intrinsic values are the need to demonstrate the Return on Investment (ROI). Portfolios encourage the cooperation of stakeholders and innovation. A sustainable portfolio focuses on the impact of the event on the environment, the society and the economy of the city. One of the priorities is to invest in permanent events. This is a recommended strategy towards an enduring and sustainable event to avoid risks and costs. Consequently, the city will attract visitors and will show the city values. On the contrary, mega-events have high costs and

risks. In case events are not feasible, they will fail to meet sustainability. Towards Risk Reduction, the management should consider the parameters, such as season, target audience, size, costs, portfolio and venues. Adding new units to the portfolio is a process that breathes new life into the event. Balance is the key to attain the initial goals. Furthermore, the event should fit the destination. For this reason, it is a less risky tactic to renew an already existing event. The events portfolios should adapt to social changes, such as economic conditions and consumer trends to be updated. (Getz, 2016)

The third and last dimension of Sustainable events is the Sustainability Population of events. A study of the population is vital, the management of the event should predict the rise or decline of the population. The age and the number of people are two aspects that should be examined. A sustainable population is a healthy population meaning free from disease and in a positive state of well-being. (Getz, 2016) COVID-19 era affected humanity physically and mentally and as a matter of fact, entertainment was considered a redundant element in the life of many.

Too many events are costly and do not offer a cost-benefit to the city; simultaneously they lack transparency. Thus a unique and sustainable event is a safe strategy. The policymakers and the strategists should ponder over two specifications: how they can be supportive of the event and if the events are a problem-solving solution acting as a positive force. Policymakers should take into account the events and strategists should complete a standard evaluation and assess the measures and methods. At the same time, all events should be guided by sustainability standards. Events should be 'green' and act as a positive power. (Getz, 2016)

According to Richards and Palmer (2010) cities such as Edinburgh, Barcelona, Montreal, Melbourne, Rotterdam and Singapore are among the ones that took advantage of their festivalization and achieved sustainability and their core goals.

#### **2.4.1 Case Study (Barcelona Model)**

The 'Barcelona Model' is a case that is worth attention. The 'Barcelona Model' was developed during the Barcelona Olympic Games in 1992 and it was based on public-private collaboration. The most important elements to consider are:

- a) the harmony between public administrations.
- b) the engagement of the private sector in the financing of projects.
- c) the appointment of independent groups to control planning and finance.
- d) the architectural restoration.
- e) the establishment of strategic planning.
- f) the prioritization of ideas to profit.

Barcelona hosted the Olympic Games (1992) and then a sequence of theme years pursued (2000-2004). 2002 was a blast, it was the Gaudi year and reached the record of incoming tourism. However, 2004 was a failure and led to the end of the successful eventful years. Researchers claim that the lack of sponsorships by large entrepreneurs and lack of consulting drove to the end of these prosperous years. Such instances indicate the significance of stakeholder collaboration. Last but not least, the planning horizon of 20-25 years is crucial before implementing such strategies. (Hannigan & Richards, 2017)

#### **2.4.2 Case Study (Fringe Festival)**

Fringe Festival started in 1947 when the society needed rejuvenation after the Second World War. Edinburgh is a city that has many things in common with other destinations and a special event to differentiate the city from other destinations as needed. Fringe Festival was a success since the main goal was achieved. The Festival brought indeed to the city a feeling of uniqueness and refreshment; besides Edinburgh managed to boost its European cultural identity. Today it is the largest arts festival in the world. (Home | Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2020) Another reason why Edinburgh Fringe Festival is considered a success story is a long-term strategy behind this institution. A prosperous event is an accomplishment that needs a detailed organization and cannot always be guaranteed and that is why such events are worth noticing. Nevertheless, the existence of the Parthenon imitation is not the only reason why Edinburgh is called 'Athens of the North'. The international recognition and the place Edinburgh holds in the global market link it to the image of Athens as the cultural center in ancient times.



Fringe festival is an annual event held in August and it lasts for three weeks, almost 25 days precisely. The organization supports young and fresh performers since it is believed that they refresh the culture of the city. The Fringe Society is the organization that holds the event and it is open to new performers and artists; anyone can perform, especially new artists. Also any venue that is willing to welcome the event can be a potential venue of the festival. An interesting point about the Fringe festival is that there isn't a single venue where the event is held rather many different spots in the city. In reality the festival takes place in more than 300 venues and more than 3,500 shows are performed. Theatre, comedy, circus, musicals, concerts, exhibitions, opera and children's shows are just a few of the shows that are included in the umbrella of Fringe Festival. (Home | Edinburgh Festival Fringe, 2020)

Edinburgh is a mainly young city since many young students from all over the world live and study there. However, during the summer season, the students tend to return to their homeland. Therefore August is viewed as a low tourist month and an event held in August boosts the economy of the city and makes Edinburgh a famous destination even for summertime. Another remarkable detail about the Fringe Festival is that the event attracts young people, which is the intended target group rather than mere tourists. This parameter highlights the importance of bearing in mind a certain target group before structuring an event.

An interesting part to analyze Edinburgh is the Edinburgh Tourism Action Group (ETAG) which is the organizing mechanism behind the Fringe Festival as well as other events of the city. ETAG focuses on the interests of both the private and public sectors. This organisation believes that the well-being of the community aims to the prosperity of both the public and the private sector. Entrepreneurs from the private sector play an important role in the organisation of the festival and their interests are taken highly into consideration regarding the planning of the events. (Yeoman et al., 2009)

#### **2.4.3 Case Study (Malmö)**

Love Dance Festival (*Malmöfestivalen*) takes place on the 15<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> August in the city center of Malmö and it is a popular outdoor dance festival. The visitors can enjoy art, music,

concerts, dancing, and food that depict the intercultural footprint of Malmö. This is the largest event in Scandinavia and there are annually 1,400,000 visitors. There are dance classes in the following dance styles: salsa LA style, salsa NY style, Cuban salsa, Colombian salsa, bachata, kizomba, tarraxinha, semba, afro house, tango, cha-cha. Malmö is just 20 minutes away from Copenhagen, which makes it easily accessible from other European cities as well. One of the most intriguing points is that the entrance is free. (Malmö, 2020)

Malmö Dance Week takes place on 25<sup>th</sup> October- 3<sup>rd</sup> November and 7,500 visit it annually. The festival includes dance battles, workshops, movie nights, theatre nights, lectures and culture lunch. (Malmö Dance Week | 25 Oct - 3 Nov 2019, 2020)

Tango Summer Festival Malmö takes place annually on 1<sup>st</sup> July-7<sup>th</sup> July, which celebrates tango. The visitors can enjoy tango classes, workshops, seminars, choreography seminars, etc.

Intonal Festival takes place on 24<sup>th</sup> April- 28<sup>th</sup> April and it is an annual festival for experimental and electronic music. The DJs are not quite famous; however, the festival takes place every year since 2015. The visitors find the innovative scene for dance music interesting. (Intonal, 2020)

As we can see the Dance Festivals in Malmö are distributed in calendar to reduce seasonality, the city's Council aims to attract visitors throughout the year, however the city has not become an Eventful City and the numerous events attract a certain number of visitors during the events, but have not contributed to the popularity of the city in an international level.

## **2.5 The relationship between a city and an event**

Characterizations such as the 'Entrepreneurial City', the 'Creative City', and the 'Intercultural City' star in the description of the Eventful city. When a destination becomes an eventful city is then an economic center, a creative city promoting interculturalism. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

The relationship between a city and an event has multiple dimensions rather than focusing exclusively on the financial interests of the locals. An eventful city offers local pride and social bonding through the promotion of existing tradition, while new elements are added to the existing tradition. The relationship between the city and the event could be characterized by any other than static. The city is not just a setting place for an event, the city narrates a story through the event. (Simons, 2017)

A city is much more than a place in space. “People make Glasgow” is the official motto of Glasgow and it is quite interesting to mention that a destination is branded around the philosophy and the temperament of its people. A festival brings together the local community, connects the locals with the artists, the artists with the visitors, and the visitors with the locals. Thus the impact of a festival on the social life of a city is vital since it creates great social bonding. The city becomes distinctive through the atmosphere and the temperament of locals rather than the buildings and inanimate characteristics of a destination.

The culture, the venues, the cultural history and the people of the city are some of the parameters taken into consideration before choosing a city to be branded as an eventful city. If a city lacks cultural background and has nothing attractive to promote then it is not appropriate to be branded as an eventful city.

Creativity is utilized as a tool by ‘Eventful City’ to bring in balance social and economic problems. Creative tourism is a means of engaging tourists in the creative aspect of city life. Creativity is an innovative means of using current assets, a means of strengthening the destination identity and uniqueness, a form of self-expression and realization, a form of educational entertainment, a form to recreate places and develop a certain atmosphere for destinations. Creative tourism is a form of cultural tourism; therefore a creative city prioritizes cultural values over economic profit. (Marcques & Richards, 2012)

An interesting case to analyze the relationship between a city and an event is the Incubate Festival. The Incubate Festival used to be held in the City of Tilburg in the Netherlands from 2005 to 2016. The city had a dynamic relationship with the event since the event offered the chance to the community to engage in the event thanks to the following reasons. Firstly, the event promoted local artists and supported financially the local entrepreneurs.

Secondly, the event attracted a large and mixed target group. Last but not least, the relationship between the city and the event was dynamic as it should be when it comes to an eventful city. (Simons, 2017)

The relationship between a city and an event should be sustainable as the one between the Tilburg community and the Incubate Festival. Despite the fact that the event funding was criticized for the last years of the organization of the event and in the end, it was terminated; thus led to the end of the event, in the beginning, the event seemed like a chance for the city towards a prosperous future. Hence strong networking was built around the event. The local community supported the event by offering voluntary labor to the event. Sponsors, DMOs and public authorities supported the event as well. Such bonding between a community and an event is a role model for any ambitious event city. (Simons 2017)

An event contributes not necessarily only to the economic progress of a community, but also to social flourishing. A cultural event focused on the interests and the traditions of a community will bring locals together and will boost their social activity even if limited incoming tourism is attracted. For this reason, the profile of the city should be taken into consideration. The city may be developed by running an event that has been created based on the experience of the city (Erlebnisgesellschaft). This is the so-called Experience society, where the economy flares through actions based on public experience. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

Hence the most important part of the relationship between the city and the event is that the event contributes to the formation of the city's identity. The event is an inseparable part of the city's character. The extensive mobility for a short or a longer period revolutionizes the profile of the city. Multiculturalism comes in the spotlight when it comes to intercultural events. Cities are a center to exchange ideas and intercultural engagement since people from various cultural backgrounds can participate and hence create a cultural mosaic. A multicultural event transforms the city's civic culture.

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An intercultural city is open. "Scotland is Open" is the motto of Scotland today. As a destination welcomes not only tourists to visit it, but also students to study there and even future citizens to move there and start a new life. Scotland as an open country hosts events such as the Fringe Festival, which is an open multicultural event. Open to new artists, borderless and open to new ideas. Any eventful city should radiate openness in a way that welcomes people across the globe.

## **2.6 Seasonality**

Seasonality is defined as the temporary fluctuation of people due to climate conditions etc. (Corluka, 2018) Many researchers classify Seasonality in three categories: a) the weather, b) the time of the year and c) the timing decisions. Many destinations are characterized as summer destinations, such as Mediterranean countries or winter destinations, such as the Alps or Lapland. According to the second category, the high season of some destinations is linked to the time of the year. For example, many destinations are busy during the Christmas period, because famous Christmas markets are held there. The third reason for Seasonality is timing, such as school vacations or vacation from work. However, the most common categorization of Seasonality is the natural and the institutionalized seasonality. Many researchers also add a third category, the additional causes. The natural seasonality is not quite different from the weather category of Seasonality, while the institutionalized seasonality includes the timing decisions and the time of the year seasonality. (Corluka, 2018)

The off-peak season has tremendous negative ramifications in the economy of Seasonal destinations. The employees of tourist businesses work only a certain period of the year and the rest of the year are forced to be unemployed. At the same time, tourist businesses spend

yearly a lot of money on HR training due to the continuous HR renewal. Moreover, the socio-cultural impact of Seasonality is huge, since large fluctuation of visitors leads to increasing prices and overcrowding at central places. During the low season, domestic tourism is encouraged. (Corluka, 2018)

Today there is an urgent need for a city to differentiate and be branded as something more than a mere city-break destination. The organization of an event in the low season period is a successful strategy because tourism inflow will be spread all year round. The profile of the city changes when a big and successful event takes place annually. Today's youth are strict judges and they don't easily approve of an action. The event must be successful to attract a large number of visitors. Especially the after-pandemic period requires a stable strategic plan to regenerate the economy of the city. Consequently, the organization of such an event would be ideal after a crisis period to boost financially the local community. The eventful city is certainly an enticing differentiation strategy and it could be characterized as a flexible investment since it does not require the construction of large venues and structures. The festival should have a central keynote, however, this does not mean that it cannot adapt to the changes and the requirements of the society with time. Nevertheless, a festival is a good reason to improve the transport infrastructure of the city and the large venues to host the expected visitors. (Getz, 2016)

One of the main strategies to fight seasonality is the Introduction and the development of festivals and events. Festivals are viewed as a way to fight the low season period.

Another question that often arises when eventfulness is discussed is to what extent the destination will profit since an event takes place at a certain time and in a certain part of the city. (Simons, 2017) However, DMOs perceive an event as the hallmark of the destination. A city gains popularity thanks to the event and tourists visit a famous destination even out of the peak season. The branding of a destination as an eventful city thus extends the tourist season.

## **2.7 Competitiveness**

A combination of qualitative, meaning the intangible attributes and quantitative analysis, meaning measurements, is necessary to discover whether a city has a competitive advantage and which is it. The competitive advantage of a city attracts potential businessmen and tourists as well as the existing entrepreneurs and residents. Another crucial parameter that should be examined when it comes to the competitiveness of a city is the analysis of the internal and the external environment. The term internal environment refers to what is under the city's control, such as the historical and natural resources, the infrastructure and the tourism businesses. On the other hand, the external environment consists of political, economical, social and natural factors, which cannot be controlled. The city has to use the resources it has already having in mind the external factors. (Cibinskiene and Snieskiene, 2015)

The eventful city is a growth strategy to use the city's cultural identity as a trademark and beetle over the rest of the destinations. Numerous cities today have become eventful. Events are image-makers for cities, generate economic impact and act as a tourist attraction in a more flexible version. (Richards & Palmer, 2010)

Destination marketing and management (DMM) aims to find a sustainable competitive advantage for the destination, this is a means to increase the competition between tourist destinations. Destination organizations build the image of the city, assist the city to become more competitive, and create unique experiences for the visitors through innovation. Event management is a vital activity for cities considering it reduces seasonality, revivals the city as well as strengthens the city's profile. (Sainaghi & Baggio, 2019)

Major events are a tool for global recognition, attract visitors, media pay attention to the city and of course, the profit of the city is increased. In this day and age, the model of 'Eventful City' embeds further city models such as the creative, the tourist and the entertainment city. On the contrary, the majority of strategists doubt mega-events, since the large investments do not bring in the city according to profit. Therefore an intense competition persists as well between the cities that are nominated to host the European Capital City or Olympic Games. The benefits of such events are multiple and any city would like to acquire this title. European Union invests an enormous amount of money in the European Capital city and the nominated City constructs venues to improve the

transportation infrastructure, improves the environmental quality or renovates buildings using these funds to host the events that will take place there throughout the year. The improved infrastructure of the city will become a reason to host events in the future years as well. When a city becomes a European Capital City gains so much popularity that it will attract tourists even in the future years.

## **2.8 Customer Analysis**

In-depth knowledge of customers and the market is of utmost significance, the better the organizing committee knows the needs of the customers the higher the chances to create an appealing product. In our case, the product is a festival and the customers are the sponsors, the visitors, the locals, etc. Detailed knowledge of the stakeholders' preferences will lead to their satisfaction. Research when organizing the event is equally as important as an event experience measurement on the day of the event. The experience of the visitors should be measured somehow when the crucial day arrives so that the event gets improved year-by-year and continues to be appealing over time. Certainly, an Eventful City aspires to a long life cycle; therefore continuous observation of competitors' events, customer feedback and research for up-to-date innovation are core elements of it. The organizing committee should constantly observe the stakeholders' decisions and inclinations so that the event adapts fast to the trends and always be up to date. Simultaneously the organizers should have an in-depth insight into the competitors' strategy and tactics. Otherwise, the organizers will have to deal with surprises. (Yeoman et al., 2009)

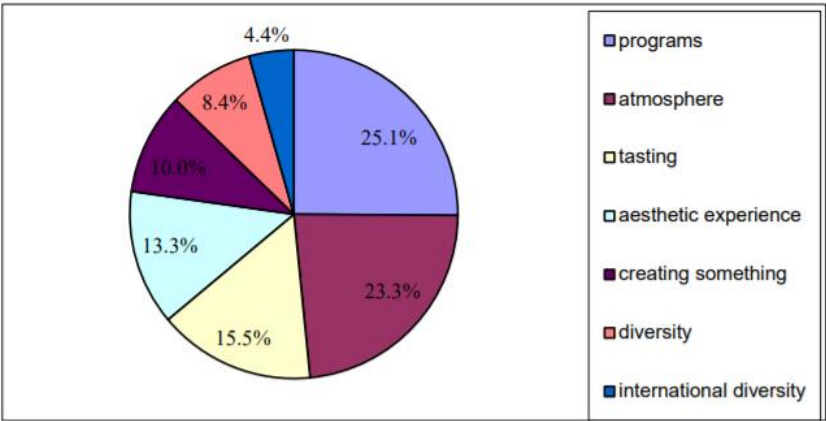
Customer observation is closely linked to the Marketing department. The marketers need to have a thorough understanding of the market so that they create an event with a competitive advantage. (Yeoman et al., 2009) An innovative project needs a meticulous search of relevant events in the market. After comparing the events themselves as well as the events to the destination it can be inferred what fits the destination. The event has to show up the culture and the mentality of the city combined with the trends of the targeted group and the era. An event that merely follows the norms cannot shine out. An eventful city needs to narrate a unique story to the visitors. Moreover, it should be mentioned that after the pre-campaign testing, which measures the customer behavior, a post-campaign



should be set to measure the results of the marketing campaign and how successful the event is.

At the same time, the community of an Eventful City should act as a team, community involvement is a key factor in the success of a destination branding. The social and economic impact are core goals of an Eventful City. The interests of the community are prioritized when it comes to the organisation of such an event. The social benefits are noticed in the long-term when the locals are proud to be a part of the specific community, they also need to be identified with the event in order to feel a part of the whole. In addition, the locals lead a healthy lifestyle, since culture is a part of their life and they feel refreshed.

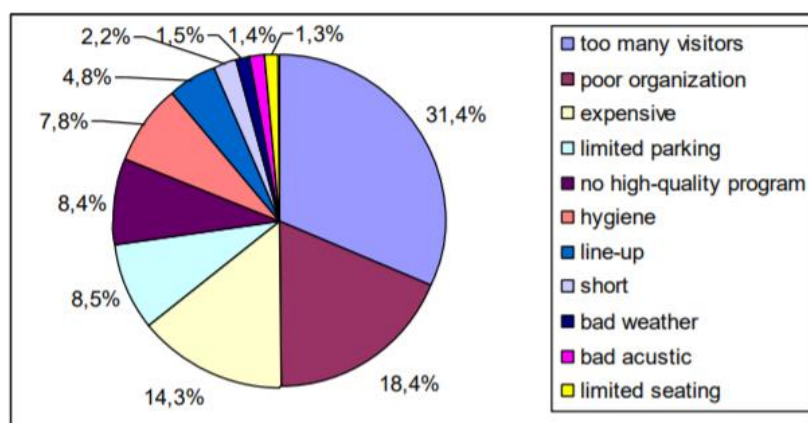
Table 2 What makes a festival good?



Jusztin, 2012

The most important parameter visitors bear in mind to attend a festival is the program and the theme is also what makes a festival good. Second comes the atmosphere. It is hard to define the atmosphere, since it consists of many factors. The inclination of a large number of tourists to gastronomy seems to be the reason why tasting comes in third place. The aesthetic experience and creative activity come next. However, international diversity plays a minor role in the success of a festival, which is a rather controversial result, because strategists seek to organize a diverse event in order to stand. (Jusztin, 2012)

Table 3 Causes of negative satisfaction levels



*Jusztin, 2012*

Overcrowding is the number one reason for visitors' dissatisfaction. Nevertheless, this factor depends on the kind of event, in some events, such as pop festivals, a high number of visitors is a positive element, while in other events visitors cannot enjoy the experience due to overcrowding, such as at folk art events. The weaknesses in organization seem to highly affect the opinion of the visitors, thus a poor program or the high cost of the fee may lead to dissatisfaction as well. Next come the limited parking lots, the poor hygiene and the line-up, which contribute to a negative experience. (Jusztin, 2012)

Moreover, another interesting example to stress out is the city of Zagreb. Zagreb is located in Croatia, which is a Mediterranean country and tourism is mainly seasonal during the summer months. However, Croatia started placing emphasis on organizing events in Croatian cities during the low-season. Zagreb is quite an interesting case since the city tackles to establish its identity. According to research, 24% of Zagreb's tourists are interested in gaining new experiences and attending events, 17% of them are interested in cultural heritage and 14% of them are interested in entertainment. It is obvious that experiential tourism and events attract larger audiences than cultural monuments do. (Jelinčić & Žuvela, 2012)

Nowadays the relationship between creativity and tourism is of utmost significance since the model of 'Creative city' entrains numerous advantages. In this context, creative people become 'creative tourists', who are attracted by theatre, arts, and architecture. It is quite difficult today for cities to distinguish and appeal to the demanding audience. (Richards, 2013)

According to the evolution of cultural content in urban experiences, the first one is 'Cultural Tourism', which is produced by the social class and it is based on cultural assets. This is the traditional model of tourism. A more alternative and modern model of tourism is 'Creative Tourism', which is based on individual skills and talent. Tourists are involved in a creative process. The third model is the 'Relational Tourism', which requires collective knowledge and social networks. This model of tourism is hinged on the relational exchange, the value of experiences is settled by the interchanged relationships. (Richards, 2013)

### **3. Methodology**

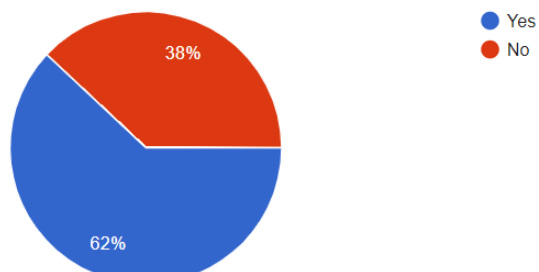
The literature review is based on books as well as supplementary methods, such as journals, scientific articles, reports and secondary research on websites related to Event Management and Eventful Cities. The afore-mentioned literature was examined on how this strategy could be applied in Thessaloniki. Thereinafter, a survey on transforming Thessaloniki into an Eventful City was conducted, the results and some interviews on stakeholders of events held in Thessaloniki are used to support the theoretical background. Thus both qualitative and partly quantitative analysis was used to investigate the relationship between Thessaloniki and a potential mega-event.

A questionnaire was conducted to identify Thessaloniki as a future eventful destination and whether Eventfulness is a successful differentiation strategy according to the travellers. The survey was quite successful, 200 participants completed the survey. The participants were locals, Greeks citizens from other Greek cities and tourists from abroad. Their answers proved meaningful for the dissertation's goals. The questions were based on how familiar travellers are with eventful cities and how this affects the choice of their travel destination if they would visit an event held in Thessaloniki during the low season, their interests and whether Thessaloniki could be branded as a Dance City.

## The concept of "eventful city"

1. Are you familiar with the term "eventful city"?

200 responses



## 4. Data Analysis

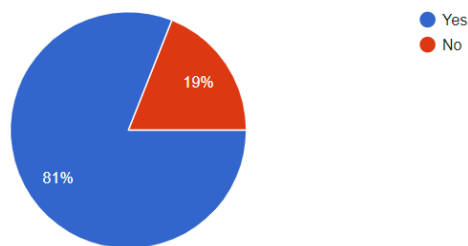
### 4.1 The concept of eventful city

The first section of the survey analyzes the Concept of Eventful city. The four questions were based on the study of Mrs. Pereira Fernandes Delgado (2013) *Eventful Cities' And Cities Of Events – Medieval Events In Portugal*.

Regarding whether respondents are familiar with the term 'Eventful City' 62% of them meaning 124 participants replied that are familiar, while 38% meaning 76 participants replied negatively.

2. Do you take into consideration the events happening in the destination you visit when you travel?

200 responses

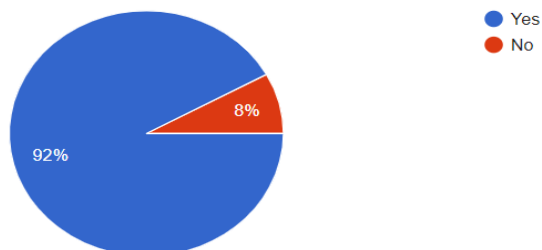


When asking whether the respondents take into consideration the events happening in the destination they visit 162 (81%) replied that they bear in mind the events happening when selecting a travel destination, while only 38 (19%) do not take into consideration the events happening during their travel planning. The high tendency of tourists to travel to destinations to attend events shows the effectiveness of Events as a strategy to attract visitors.

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3. Have you ever visited a festival?

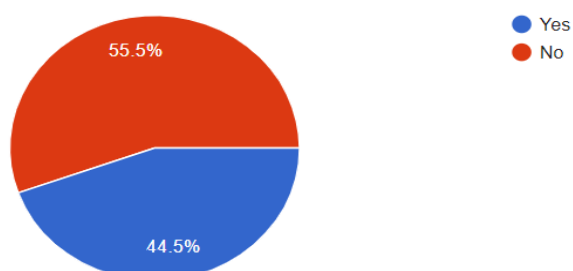
200 responses



Not surprisingly 162 (92%) out of 200 have visited at least once a festival, while only 16 (8%) have not ever visited a festival.

4. Has a festival ever been the main reason to visit a city?

200 responses



Almost half of the respondents have travelled to a destination to attend a festival, more specifically 111 (55,5%), while 89 (44,5%) have not travelled to a destination for the mere reason to attend an event.

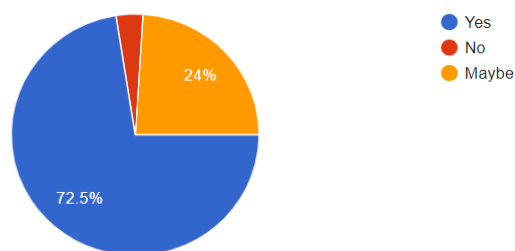
#### 4.2 Thessaloniki as a destination

The second section analyzes Thessaloniki as a destination. Question 1 and Question 2 emerged from the journal *Tourism Seasonality - An Overview* by Mr. Corluka (2018). Question 3 and Question 4 emerged from the Scientific Paper *Evaluation of city tourism competitiveness* by Mr. Cibinskiene and Mr. Snieskiene (2015).

##### Thessaloniki as a destination

1. Would you visit Thessaloniki in October?

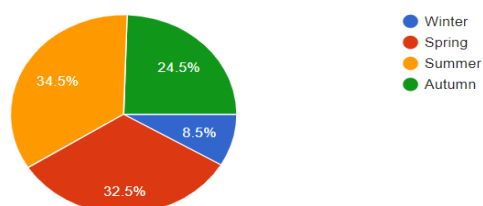
200 responses



In Question 1 derives the topic of Seasonality. Thessaloniki is an urban center and travellers will find places to visit all year round. Most of the respondents, more specifically 145 (72,5%) answered that they would visit Thessaloniki in October, 48 (24%) are not sure and only 7 (3,5%) replied that they would not visit Thessaloniki in October. However, many of the participants live in Thessaloniki so they visit anyway the center and the events of the visit during the low season. The most important point that is stressed is that visitors are always willing to visit Thessaloniki, even in the low season.

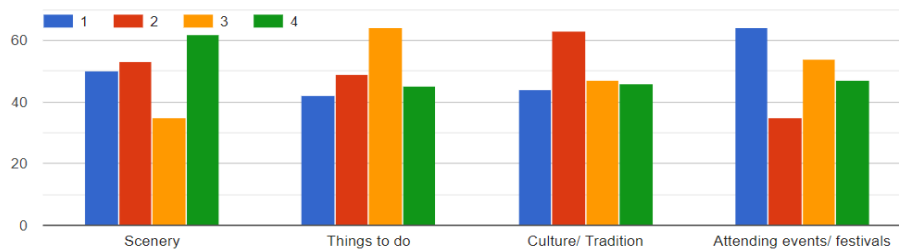
2. Which one is the most tourist season of Thessaloniki?

200 responses



It comes naturally that Spring and Summer belong to the high season according to public opinion. In particular, 69 (34,5%) believe that Summer is the most tourist season, 65 (32,5%) support that Spring is the highest season, 49 (24,5%) voted for Autumn and only 17 (8,5%) voted for Winter. Hence, Autumn belongs to the low season.

3. Which is the most important factor to visit Thessaloniki? Please rank the items below in terms of their importance to you. Rank them from 1 for the most important to 4 for the least important.



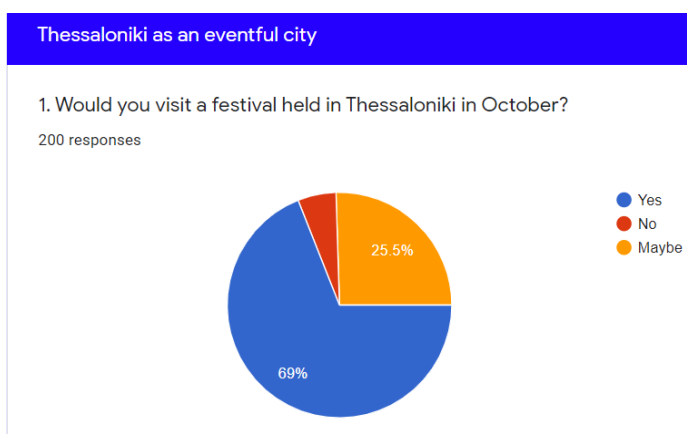
When participants were enquired which is the most important factor to visit Thessaloniki 'Attending events/festivals' is the factor that the most participants chose as the most important factor to visit the city, more specifically 64 chose 'Attending events/festivals' as their first reason to visit the city, 35 chose it as their second reason, 54 chose it as the third reason and 47 chose it as their last reason to visit the city. The next factor was 'Scenery', 50 participants voted it as their first reason to visit Thessaloniki, 53 as their second choice, 35 as their third choice and 62 as their last choice. The next factor was 'Things to do', 42 respondents replied that this is the first reason why they would travel to the destination, 49 chose it as their second reason, 64 answered it is their third choice and 45 as their last choice. The last factor to visit Thessaloniki is the 'Culture/Tradition', 44 participants responded that this factor was their first choice, 63 responded this was their second choice, for 47 it was their third choice and for 46 it was their last choice.



The only means of public transportation is the bus organization OASTH. The participants were asked to evaluate the public transportation of the city ranking 1 as very bad and 5 as very good. It comes naturally that 84 (42%) answered it is Very Bad, 57 (28,5%) described it as Bad, 47 (23,5%) were neutral, 8 (4%) described it as Good and only 4 (2%) described it as Very Good.

#### 4.3 Thessaloniki as an Eventful City

The third section analyzes Thessaloniki as an Eventful City. Question 2 and Question 4 emerge from the study of Mrs. Pereira Fernandes Delgado (2013) *Eventful Cities' And Cities Of Events – Medieval Events In Portugal*. Question 1 emerges from the journal Tourism Seasonality - An Overview by Mr. Corluka (2018). Question 3, Question 8 and Question 9 emerged from the Scientific Paper *Evaluation of city tourism competitiveness* by Mr. Cibinskiene and Mr. Snieskiene (2015).



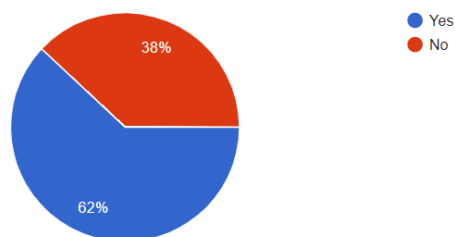


The majority of respondents, in particular 138 (69%), would visit Thessaloniki in October, 51 (25,5%) are not sure and only 11 (5,5%) replied that they would not visit Thessaloniki in October.

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2. Are you aware of Dimitria Festival held in Thessaloniki in October?

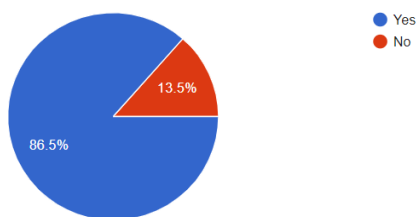
200 responses



Dimitria Festival is the most important Cultural Festival in Thessaloniki held annually in October, 124 (62%) are aware of the event, while 76 (38%) are not aware of it.

3. Would you describe Thessaloniki as a cultural city? (Take into consideration different cultural events ie. theatrical performances, concerts, dance events etc.)

200 responses

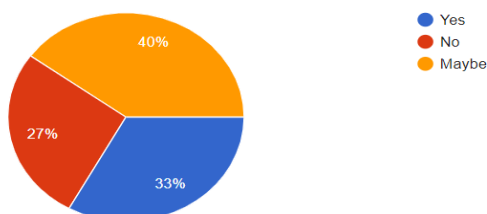


The majority of the respondents, 173 (86,5%) of them, would describe Thessaloniki as a cultural city, whereas only 27 (13,5%) of them would not do so.

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4. Do you think Thessaloniki could be branded as a Dance City?

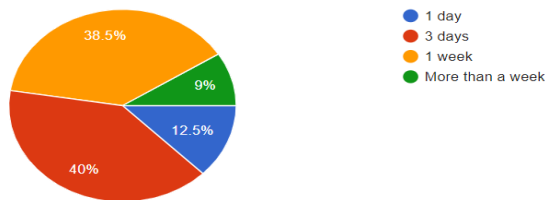
200 responses



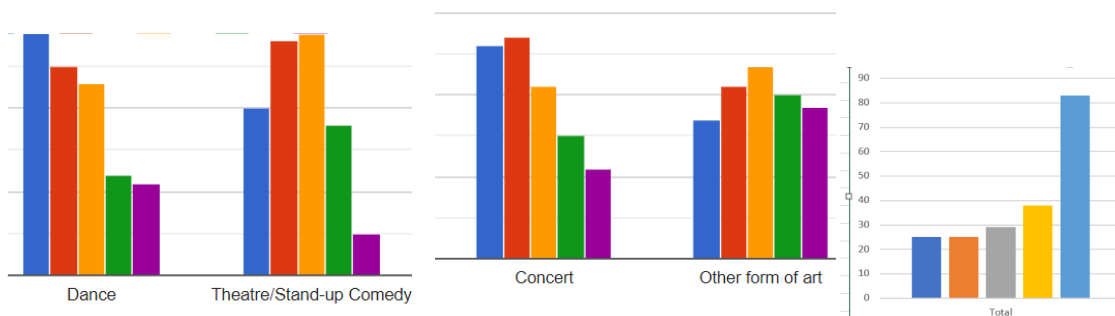
When participants were asked whether they would describe Thessaloniki as a Dance City 80 (40%) of them were not sure, 66 (33%) would describe it as a Dance City and 54 (27%) would not do so.

5. If the festival lasts 3 weeks it would be more likely to visit:

200 responses



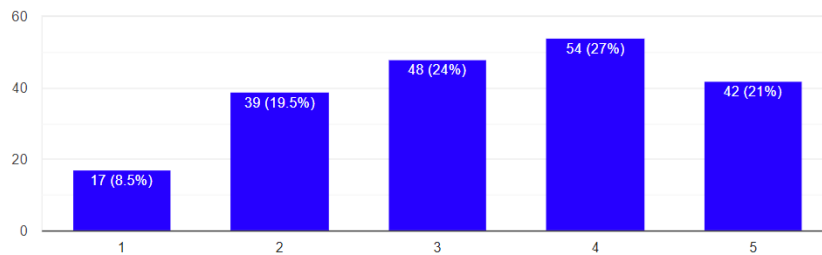
When the participants were asked how long they would visit the festival, 80 (40%) would visit it for three days, 77 (38,5%) would visit it for one week, 25 (12,5%) would visit it 1 day and 18 (9%) would visit it for more than a week.



Afterwards, the respondents were asked which form of art they are most interested in, ranking from 1 as the most important and 5 the least important. The first category was Dance, 58 voted it as the most important, 50 as fairly important, 46 as important, 24 as slightly important and 22 as not important at all. The second category was Theatre and Stand-up Comedy, 40 selected it as the most important, 56 as fairly important, 58 as important, 36 as slightly important and 10 as not important at all. The third category was Concert, 52 selected it as the most important, 54 as fairly important, 42 as important, 30 as slightly important and 22 as not important at all. The fourth category was any Other Form of Art 34 selected it the most important, 42 as fairly important, 47 as important, 40 as slightly important and 37 as not important at all. The fifth category was Opera, 25 selected it as the most important, 25 as fairly important, 29 as important, 38 as slightly important and 83 as not important at all.

7. How likely is it to attend a Dance Festival in Thessaloniki, which includes different kinds of dance, such as Hip Hop, Latin, Traditional etc. ?

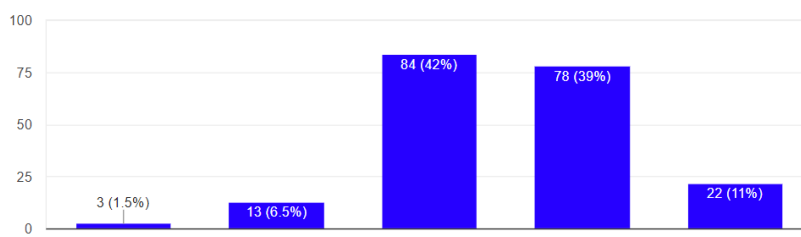
200 responses



When the respondents were asked how likely it is to attend a Dance Festival in Thessaloniki with various kinds of dance, 42 (21%) answered it is high likely, 54 (27%) answered it is likely, 48 (24%) were neutral, 39 (19,5%) replied it is unlikely to attend such an event and only 17 (8,5%) replied that it is not at all likely to attend the event.

8. How would you evaluate the existing indoor and outdoor venues in Thessaloniki?

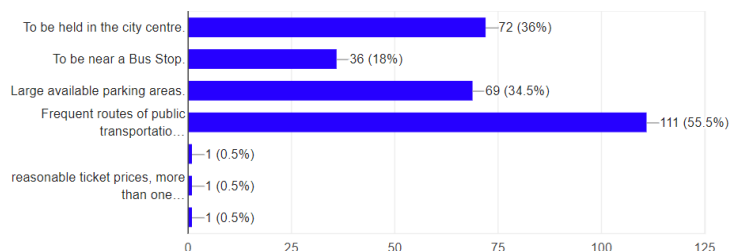
200 responses



Regarding the existing indoor and outdoor venues only 3 (1,5%) described them as Very Bad, 13 (6,5%) as Bad, 84 (42%) were neutral, 78 (39%) described them as Good and 22 (11%) described them as Very Good.

9. What is more important to visit a festival ?

200 responses

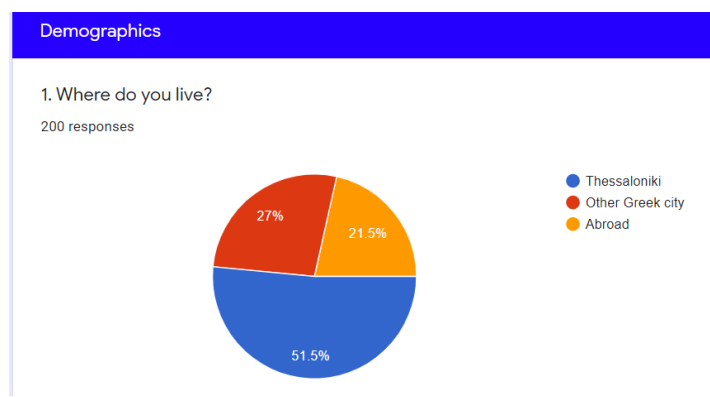


Regarding what is more important to visit a festival 111 (55,5%) chose the Frequent routes of public transportation, 72 (36%) chose to be held in the city centre, 69 (34,5%) chose the large available parking areas and 36 (18%) chose to be near a bus stop. It is quite useful to

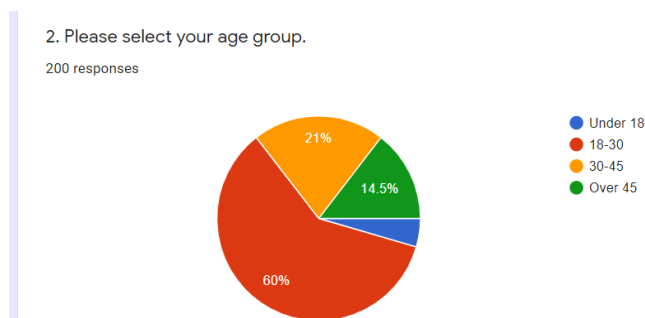
bear in mind that participants had the option to choose more than one answer and even add their own. A participant (0,5%) suggested the reasonable ticket price and more than one day passes, another participant (0,5%), suggested to be well-organized and promising and another participant (0,5%) suggested to have a wide range of events to choose from.

#### 4.4 Demographics

The fourth section analyzes the Demographics, it is essential to be aware of the interests of the target audience, so that the Event Organizers should focus on.



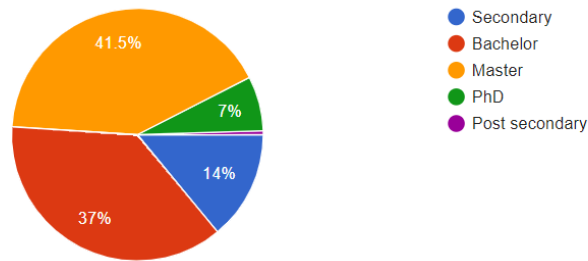
Almost half of the respondents, more specifically 103 (51,5%) were from Thessaloniki, 54 (27%) were from other Greek cities and 43 (21,5%) were from abroad.



The age groups were four. The respondents under 18 were 9 (4,5%), the majority of respondents were between 18-30, more specifically they were 120 (60%), there were 42 (21%) respondents between 30-45 and the last group was Over 45 with 29 (14,5%) respondents.

3. Please select the level of your education.

200 responses



The majority of the respondents, in particular 83 (41,5%), hold a Master Degree, 74 (37%) hold a Bachelor degree, 28 (14%) have finished Secondary education, 14 (7%) have a Ph.D. and 1 (0,5%) has attended Post Secondary education.

## 5. Interpretations of findings

Taking into consideration the data of the survey the respondents are quite familiar with the term 'eventful city', an overwhelming majority takes into consideration the events happening in a destination when they choose their travel destination and it has already visited an event or even have travelled for the mere reason to attend an event.

On that account, Event Tourism is a profitable industry and many travellers are keen on it and are willing to spend money to travel and attend an inviting event.

Examining the data, it turns out that Thessaloniki is a tempting destination and despite the fact that October is undoubtedly a month in the low season, the majority of participants responded positively that they would visit the city in October. It seems that Thessaloniki as a destination offers plenty of activities to the visitors, has picturesque scenery and the culture of the city are interesting factors to visit the city. Notwithstanding, travellers would be more willing to visit the city to attend an event or a festival even if the city is not an 'eventful city' at the very moment. This data stresses out that Thessaloniki reasonably designs on becoming an 'eventful city'.

Surely, the infrastructure of the city needs improvement. The overwhelming majority replied that the means of transportation in Thessaloniki is 'Very Bad'. The only means of transportation in a city of 1,5 million residents is the bus, which is supported by an organization partly public and partly private.

The buses are not adequate for the large population of the city, which results in congestion. After all, using a car in the city center is not the best idea, since parking is a hard attempt as well. Thus, transportation may bother the visitors as it already does to the residents.

It is highly encouraging the fact that the majority of the respondents believe that Thessaloniki could be transformed into an 'eventful city', they believe it could be branded as a Dance City and it is highly likely they would visit a Dance event in Thessaloniki.

Moreover, it is quite interesting to pay attention to the fact that the Dimitria Festival is not widely known despite this institution taking place since 1966. Bearing in mind the length of the Dimitria Festival's organization the lack of travellers' awareness about the event equals inadequate marketing and stagnation of the institution.

Furthermore, factors such as the location of the venue, the distance from public transportation, the frequency of public transportation and the available parking areas need to be examined. Thessaloniki has a congestion issue and the situation should be improved in order to be a welcoming destination that does not leave to the visitors a sense of dissatisfaction.

## **6. Conclusion and recommendations**

Cities borrow ideas from one another and implement them under their regional policies to improve the quality of city life and the city's image. The city is a space for communal creativity and celebrations, festivals are an instrument for communicating the relationship between identity and destination. Festivals are occasions to praise shared histories, shared cultural backgrounds and arises the need for collectivity and belongingness to a community.

As a concept 'eventful city' will indeed benefit Thessaloniki in multiple sectors. Economic growth will be noticed, the city will acquire a competitive advantage, social cohesion will be achieved, the locals, as well as the potential visitors, will have the sense of belongingness, the residents will find the event as a reason to escape from the routine; thus they will be entertained and additionally the audience will be educated about the modern culture and the culture of the city's ancestors.

However, an element of the city that urges improvement is the infrastructure. The construction of a subway or any additional means of transportation is urgent; so that congestion is limited. On that account, the congestion will be restricted. Furthermore, extra parking lots need to be constructed, since nowadays the cars in the city center are quite many.

Two parameters should be taken into consideration when planning the strategy of Thessaloniki as an 'eventful city', firstly investing in permanent events is a recommended strategy to avoid risks and high costs and secondly, that autumn is a low season. Combining these two factors, an event in October lasting roughly a month would be a well-chosen suggestion.

However, Thessaloniki already holds an event called Dimitria. The Dimitria Festival takes place in October and lasts roughly 20 days. The name Dimitria derives from St. Dimitrios, who is the protector of the city and the city celebrates him on the 26th of October. The 26th of October is a bank holiday for Thessalonikeans. Thus October and the Dimitria Festival have historical and cultural meaning for the locals.

In October many events take place under the umbrella of the Dimitria Festival, such as theatrical performances, the Thessaloniki International Short Film Festival, the Open Jazz Festival, Dance Sessions, Music Events and others.

Nonetheless, many residents are not even aware of the performances and believe that the festival appeals to intellectuals and sophisticated audiences only. Today it is needed the Dimitria Festival to appeal to a broader audience and especially to younger age groups. It is highly significant to mention that Thessaloniki is a prominent student city; thus a large part of the residents are young who have an abundance of free time would be willing to attend an event with the only prerequisite for the event to have a modern and fascinating topic.

As mentioned earlier the Dimitria Festival is not branded properly and even the locals are not aware of the programme. Such a significant event should be marketed properly. A successful marketing campaign and the enhancement of the festival programme with more appealing acts to the targeted group are two necessary methods to be followed.

Taking into consideration the survey the majority of the locals and inbound tourists are interested in Dance. Therefore the addition of Dance performances in the Dimitria Festival and instituting Dance as the main theme of the festivals seems a strategy that would reform the institution of the Dimitria Festival as it is now and would be transformed into a successful mega-event addressing a large audience.



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## 8. Appendix

### Questionnaire

Section 2 of 5

### The concept of "eventful city"

An "eventful city" is a city with an authentic cultural event, which is used as a touristic attraction aiming to create economic and social sustainability in local and regional community. Some typical examples of "eventful cities" are Munich (Oktoberfest), Cannes (Cannes Festival), Milan (Milan Fashion Week), Edinburgh (Fringe Festival) etc.

1. Are you familiar with the term "eventful city"? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Do you take into consideration the events happening in the destination you visit when you travel? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Have you ever visited a festival? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

4. Has a festival ever been the main reason to visit a city? \*

☐ Yes

☐ No

Section 3 of 5

## Thessaloniki as a destination

Description (optional)

1. Would you visit Thessaloniki in October? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

2. Which one is the most tourist season of Thessaloniki? \*

- ☐ Winter
- ☐ Spring
- ☐ Summer
- ☐ Autumn

3. Which is the most important factor to visit Thessaloniki? Please rank the items below in terms of their importance to you. Rank them from 1 for the most important to 4 for the least important. \*

	1	2	3	4
Scenery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Things to do	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Culture/ Tradition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending events/ f...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. How would you evaluate public transportation in Thessaloniki ? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very good

Section 4 of 5

## Thessaloniki as an eventful city

Description (optional)

1. Would you visit a festival held in Thessaloniki in October? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

2. Are you aware of Dimitria Festival held in Thessaloniki in October? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Would you describe Thessaloniki as a cultural city? (Take into consideration different cultural events ie. theatrical performances, concerts, dance events etc.) \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

4. Do you think Thessaloniki could be branded as a Dance City? \*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe

5. If the festival lasts 3 weeks it would be more likely to visit: \*

- ☐ 1 day
- ☐ 3 days
- ☐ 1 week
- ☐ More than a week

6. In which form of art are you more interested? Please rank the items below in terms of their importance to you. Rank them from 1 for the most important to 4 for the least important. \*

	1	2	3	4	5
Dance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Theatre/Stand-...	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opera	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other form of art	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How likely is it to attend a Dance Festival in Thessaloniki, which includes different kinds of dance, such as Hip Hop, Latin, Traditional etc. ? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Absolutely

8. How would you evaluate the existing indoor and outdoor venues in Thessaloniki? \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very bad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very good

9. What is more important to visit a festival ? \*

- ☐ To be held in the city centre.
- ☐ To be near a Bus Stop.
- ☐ Large available parking areas.
- ☐ Frequent routes of public transportation towards the venue.
- ☐ Other...

Section 5 of 5

## Demographics

Description (optional)

1. Where do you live? \*

- ☐ Thessaloniki
- ☐ Other Greek city
- ☐ Abroad

2. Please select your age group. \*

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-30
- ☐ 30-45
- ☐ Over 45

3. Please select the level of your education. \*

- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Master
- ☐ PhD
- ☐ Other...